



## **Eight Minutes**

*Lori Reisenbichler*

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## **Eight Minutes** Lori Reisenbichler

On the night that Shelly Buckner finally became a mother, she very nearly became a widow. Her husband, Eric, seriously injured in a car accident on the way to the hospital, was dead for a full eight minutes before being revived—all while Shelly was in labor. Those eight minutes changed everything Shelly thought was possible.

Three years later, their son, Toby, brings home an imaginary friend. But he's no ordinary playmate—John Robberson is a fighter pilot and Vietnam vet. As Toby provides unlikely details about John's life—and Toby's tantrums increase—Shelly becomes convinced that John was real and now wants something from Toby. But her husband has his doubts, and as Shelly becomes involved, even obsessed, with finding out the truth, their marriage begins to disintegrate. Torn between protecting her child and keeping the peace with her husband, Shelly desperately searches for a way to finally put John Robberson out of their lives.

## **Eight Minutes Details**

Date : Published February 17th 2015 by Lake Union Publishing

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Author : Lori Reisenbichler

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# From Reader Review Eight Minutes for online ebook

**Leonor (Ner) says**

**Rating:** 3,5 cups/stars

**Disclaimer:** Thank you Kandy Alamenda and Lori Reisenbichler for providing me with a copy.

Eight Minutes is far more than what the synopsis gives you. I started reading this book with no idea what to expect from it and in the end I admit I was surprised.

When Shelly gives birth to her son Toby, her husband Erica has an accident and is dead for a total of eight minutes. She doesn't know but those eight minutes will change her life in a way she isn't expecting. Three after this wonderful and dreadful day, Toby begins talking about a man named John Robberson. When Shelly understands that Robberson isn't Toby's imaginary friend but something more, something that can actually change and harm her family, things begin to change.

Lori Reisenbichler's debut novel managed to hook me almost straight away. How she built up the pace without giving too much and without going too fast helped getting to know the characters and sympathise with them. Shelly's thoughts, fears and her stress at having to deal with something she doesn't understand really gets into your skin and you end up wishing you could comfort her. The way her character was portrayed, the writing and the plot itself helped keeping the interest up and wanting to continue reading. You would always want to know what was going on despite having theories of your own.

The plot of what was happening came to Shelly in a slow pace. Despite the fact that she was a very clever woman, I found it somewhat uncanny that she couldn't understand what was going on. But that detail didn't bother me at all – if Shelly had immediately acted upon what was happening the book wouldn't have any substance at all.

I have to be honest that the only reason I didn't give this book a full cup and ended up rating it 3,5 cups has to do with Eric, Shelly's husband. His character got on my nerves a few times since he was so hard to understand and to understand others. Of course that with the development of the book you get to know what's actually going inside his mind, but there were a few chapters where I simply wished Shelly to slap him or to yell at him.

Other reason why I couldn't give this book a four cups rating has to do with the ending. Somehow I found the ending lacking something. The whole book had this energy to it that grabbed you instantly but the end kind of ended abruptly. I guess I was hoping for a full disclosure. Maybe this is a way for Lori Reisenbichler to allow us to have our own personal ending or to continue the story. Either way, I felt that something was amiss and that maybe the author didn't had enough time to come up with a proper ending.

Overall Eight Minutes was a unique and an unusual read. With hints at the supernatural and a plot that builds up to a breathtaking page-turner, Lori Reisenbichler is an author to keep an eye out.

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## Sharon says

A decent enough easy read about souls and reincarnation and the effects one lost soul has on the family involved.

The pace was steady and unhurried and kept me interested throughout. However, the last few of chapters I felt it just fizzle out.

Readers of 'Her Fearful Symmetry' by Audrey Niffenegger should enjoy this fun read.

I look forward to recommending Eight Minutes to customers visiting our bookstore.

I received a digital review copy for my, honest, opinion.

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## Judy Collins says

*A special thank you to Lake Union Publishing and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.*

**EIGHT MINUTES** by *Lori Reisenbichler* is a haunting debut, a tale of one two families drawn together by higher forces for an *intriguing twist of paranormal*.

**A happy normal family**, Shelly and Eric anxiously awaiting the birth of their child. However, the night of delivery, Eric does not show. He in fact winds up in the same hospital after being seriously injured in a car accident on the way to the hospital. He was dead for eight minutes and those eight minutes drastically changed the course of their lives.

**With much rehabilitation** after the accident, Shelly begins noticing a change in personality with Eric. He is not the same man. Everything is different, from emotions, interests, and even sex. Shelly wants her husband back. *Did his brain change in those eight minutes?*

**To further complicate matters**, three years later, their son brings home an imaginary friend, named John. John is not a little boy, John Robberson is a fighter pilot and Vietnam Vet. Toby is very specific when describing his friend, *a man*.

**The presence of John is strong**, and his pull becomes more apparent each day and Shelly is obsessed with finding out the truth. Her marriage is falling apart and she desperately wants to protect her child. She wants her life back and her family. She wants John gone. Could John be real, and could he have anything to do with the eight minutes Eric was dead?

**The story began** as a family drama and slowly turned to more of a reincarnation or supernatural element, without the mystery. While I kept reading to find out what would happen next, not sure I was invested in the characters, especially Eric- felt a little removed. Being I am not a fan of paranormal, not sure I would have chosen the title. However, those who enjoy supernatural or fantasy may enjoy-- *would not necessarily classify this one as women's fiction - a mix across several genres*.

**The novel proposes many thoughts.** What happens to us after death is perhaps the greatest mystery of life. One belief is that we reincarnate; that there is life, after life.

### **Michele Harrod says**

I was given a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I won't give you a full premise of the book, as that is right there in the book summary above. I was quite sure this was heading to a four star story, until the end just sort of wrapped up all to conveniently for my liking. I struggled to reconcile how the main character, who seemed quite ballsy, took the way her husband treated her (he became an almost entirely different man after an accident in which he was officially declared 'dead' for eight minutes, on the night his wife gave birth to their first child). But having some understanding of massive brain injury and how that can affect personalities so profoundly, and having NO understanding of the stresses of raising a baby in that environment - I was able to forgive that. But by crikey, I wanted to give the guy a right hook on many occasions. I love the ideas this book explored, and can well imagine the minefield it would be to explore such things if we didn't all have open minded friends, willing to consider possibilities of past life experiences, ghosts, and reincarnation, rather than have you locked up if you ever thought such things were happening to your own children.

I was definitely engrossed in this story until the last 3-4 chapters. At which point, it all became a little trite - with that prize ass of a husband, suddenly became Mr Co-operative. For me, that was even less likely than a whole bunch of ghosts or reincarnated souls potentially finding ways to come back to stay close to the people they love! But I definitely liked it. This is a refreshing voice, who with a bit more research and exploration into the metaphysical, could come up with some really good novels in future.

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### **Vickie Gesford says**

**Very ORIGINAL...Highly Recommended!**

I loved this book for the original story line, the development of the characters and their relationships and just the right amount of suspense and introspection. An incredible first book, it makes me anxious to read something else from this author.

I liked reading the thought processes of the main character and her reluctance to admit her mistakes even to herself. It was enough detail to read as if it could have been a true story without being repetitive and irritating as it happens so many times when an author continues to review the situation in the character's mind. The relationships between the main characters are easily identifiable and contemporary.

Finally, I loved that the ending did not get tied up in a nice neat bow with a gold star. You will have to think for yourself to fill in the blanks. Usually, this kind of omission leaves me aggravated, but it was an hour later when I finally realized I still didn't have all the answers and was surprised to find I didn't mind at all!

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### **Smitha says**

I got this book from NetGalley in exchange of a fair and honest review.

On the night that Shelly Buckner finally became a mother, she very nearly became a widow.

While Shelly was in the hospital, in labour, Eric, her husband has a near fatal accident, on his way to the hospital. For 8 minutes, he was dead, before he was revived and rescued by the rescue team.

Three years have passed since that near fatal accident and the joyous birth of their son, Toby. Eric and Shelly have gone through and survived some difficult times, as he went through the process of recovering from his horrific experience. They have managed to put away their ordeal, apart from the changes that have come about in Eric. His accident has changed him in some ways. While Shelly understands that such a horrific experience can change anybody, she still misses the sensitive husband of hers who was emotionally present for her whenever she needed him.

She misses him most when Toby suddenly brings home an imaginary friend, John Robberson. According to Toby, John is a Fighter pilot and all of Toby's games suddenly change to violent plane crashes which end with a broken leg. Shelly is initially alarmed that a grown man seems to have befriended Toby, while Eric was looking after him. However as Toby reveals more details about John, Shelly's fears escalate. She turns to Eric and she finds that Eric is dismissive of her worries. 'The old Eric would have never done that' is Shelly's first thought.

Toby, in the meanwhile starts showing personality changes, which has Shelly completely worried. As she struggles to understand what her son is going through, she and Eric grow further apart. Shelly doesn't understand what exactly is happening, but instinctively knows that John Robberson needs to go from their lives for things to go back to normal. I wish I could tell you more, but you are going to have to read it to find out what happens next, but I can assure you that it is a nail-biting read. I had an inkling of what was coming, but the way it ended – I loved that.

I really liked the characters, believable and real. I liked the premise of the story. It was well thought out. Shelly's desperation comes through so well, and her motivation. As well as her loneliness, the loneliness of being in a situation where the person closest to you is the farthest from you, emotionally. And even worse, when you know that the true nature of that person is so different. Shelly's state of mind is beautifully explored.

I also liked the way the book explored other belief systems, the way some beliefs are accepted in such a different way in different cultures. I would love to say more, but would hate to spoil it for you guys, if you do plan to read it.

A 3.5/5 read for me.

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### **Camille Maio says**

Shelly's husband was in a car accident on his way to the hospital, where she was giving birth to their son. He flatlined for eight minutes before coming back, but he hasn't been the same since.

As their son becomes a toddler, it becomes apparent that he has an imaginary friend. Or, is he really imaginary?

A ghost, a reincarnation, or something else joined their family at the time of the accident, and Shelly is

wiling to risk everything to get her son and husband back to normal.

I loved the premise of the book, and it was enough of a page turner that I finished it in just a few days. I liked how the author diversified the length of the chapters, saying only what needed to be said. The dialog was fantastic, and quite realistic. I really felt the burden that the situation was creating for their marriage.

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## **Kaeri says**

The publisher has given me a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

*What happens when we die?*

*Where do our souls go?*

*Does afterlife exist?*

These questions may have different answers for everyone. We all have different beliefs, some are skeptics, and some are believers. These are questions that have prodded my mind since I was little—which is why I've always been fascinated by real-life stories about near-death experiences and astral projections.

It's hard to discuss the book without spoiling too much of the story so I'll be very vague. The story's focus is on Shelly and I liked how the author built up her character. You'll really sympathize with her and feel for her even if she can get a bit crazy at times. All the characters, not just her, were very well-written (although, I didn't like Eric very much). Personally, I liked how realistic the book portrayed relationships and the impacts one aspect of your life could have to you and the people around you. I was able to put myself in Shelly's shoes—what if my boyfriend or someone close to me suddenly changes like that? I honestly don't know how I would deal.

The story can be a little creepy at times but that's part of its charm. I actually thought this could easily have been a horror story, but don't worry, it isn't. I just wish the pacing was a bit faster but overall it was a really good story. If you're into books like *If I Stay* or *Lovely Bones* then you would love this book.

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## **Robin McLean says**

If you like complex books with love, humor, a little mystery, beyond-the-grave communications -- *Eight Minutes* is a book for you. You will follow a young mom as her nice understandable life in the burbs explodes after her husband almost dies the night her son is born. A few years later something is up with both the spouse and the boy. To protect her son and marriage, she ventures off into far off / wild investigations to understand mysterious changes in both men in her life. She never imagined herself believing in the super natural, but a mom's got to do what a mom's got to do. Great characters in this book--old shotgun-toting widows on front porches, dashing War War II fighter pilots, psychics, wise neighbors and skeptical parents. *Reisenbichler* is a master story teller with a clear, confident jangly style simply irresistible.. We will go with her anywhere she leads. A great, fast, intriguing read.

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## **Cindy says**

From the synopsis on NetGalley, I thought this sounded like an interesting book. But I never expected that I would devour this book in hours! I was grabbed into this fascinating story from the very beginning.

I loved this book with its paranormal theme which is a favorite genre that I like to read. But this was a very original story, none of which I remember having come across before. The author doesn't rush the story but gives a steady pace to the storyline.

The characters were all well developed and likable with the exception of the husband, Eric, who made me angry at times. Yet, you will also be concerned at the struggle that Shelly and Eric go through in their marriage and hope for the family to stay together. The author did an excellent job with all the characters even the ones who had minor roles.

This book starts as a drama with Shelly in labor, waiting for her husband to arrive at the hospital to be with her. I don't want to give any spoilers or repeat the description of the book but I will say that the author gives a well written tale of a sweet little boy, Toby, who has an imaginary friend. Some of the stories about John, the imaginary friend gave me chills. You will find a bit of a mystery, suspense, humor and the paranormal in this novel. It is a very memorable book that truly makes you think about reincarnation and what does happen after death.

I definitely look forward to more books from this author. This is her debut novel and it is a really incredible one. I would highly recommend this wonderful book to everyone!

\* I received an ARC from the publisher and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Julie says**

Posted to Julie Reads a Book

I received a free “copy” through NetGalley.

On the night that Shelly Buckner finally became a mother, she very nearly became a widow. Her husband, Eric, seriously injured in a car accident on the way to the hospital, was dead for a full eight minutes before being revived—all while Shelly was in labor. Those eight minutes changed everything Shelly thought was possible.

Eight Minutes follows 3 main characters – Shelly, her husband, Eric, and her son, Toby. The book starts off with what happened the night Shelly gave birth, and then quickly jumps to 3 years later when Toby begins to talk about a man named John Robberson. Neither Shelly nor Eric know who this man is, and Toby seems to know so many details about this man. After a playdate, Shelly begins to think that Toby might be the reincarnation of this man. Eric, of course, does not believe her. While this book addresses the tension between Shelly and Eric, it is mostly about how Shelly deals with Toby’s “friend”. Toby is distraught about John, often having tantrums about things that he tells him.



There are a couple of twists that make this book interesting. I curious Lori Reisenbichler was going to bring everything together. The last couple of chapters of this book made me ask, "What just happened?!" I was confused because the book had been moving at a decent pace and then all of sudden...WHAM! Everything happened too quickly in the end. I give this book 3 stars because I thought the story was interesting enough to keep me reading, the characters were alright (though Eric's disrespect to his wife's concerns made me strongly dislike him. However, I did feel something for him, at least!). I pleasantly enjoyed this one, even if there were flaws.

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### **Amy (Lost in a Good Book) says**

Note: I was provided with a copy of this book for review.

This story starts with intrigue as well as drama and uncertainty which sets up the story for having a particular focus and leads you into thinking the story will head in a particular direction, which it does in a way, but it also quite different from what you expect. The narrative is well paced and Reisenbichler portrays the gradual development of the situation with John Robberson quite realistically. The situation develops slowly and there maintains a solid pace to show the increases of intensity and the gradual formation of the problem.

The strengths are in Reisenbichler's ability to show and not tell in many instances. The growing strain on Shelly and Eric marriage, as well as the trouble of trying to navigate important conversations around a three year old is evident and it supports the story much more than if things were spelled out explicitly. The characters are compelling and real and many of the interactions are believable and suitable. As a character Shelly can be taken two ways, either as a seriously overprotective mother, or as someone who is trying to do what is best for her kid. She is clearly a mother who is trying to protect her son from something she believes may be a threat, but she is also trying to understand him and help him with the problem John Robberson is causing. It is clear she is trying to be a good mum so you cannot really fault her there, and understanding her point of view means it is hard to see her as being obsessive but it's not impossible.

Where Reisenbichler uses the story, and her characters, well is how she shows both sides of the argument, and makes the readers understand them. Sometimes Shelley's actions seem on point and reasonable, whereas other times Eric's arguments seem reasonable as well, which makes the story even more captivating because it adds another level of tension and new possibilities to deal with that have been caused by the problem with Toby.

Being less focused on the paranormal element of the story means this is very much a middle-class reaction to the supernatural with Googling possible causes and theories being discussed during play dates. What I liked was that the mystery and search for an explanation is not instantly solved. The story takes place over several months which add a nice realism to it, but it also helps with the gradual progression and intensity of the problem. The concept is intriguing and the story is one that is mysterious and has a hint of the paranormal without it being full blown or overbearing.

There is mystery throughout a lot of the book as you try and work out what the truth is and what it could all possibly mean, and every theory is possible when you haven't got a lot to work with. I did work out the ending from early on but the story does not necessarily head in one single direction making it evidently clear. Reisenbichler is smart at keeping the mysterious nature ongoing, but it is never overdrawn or exaggerated.

Overall this is a curious story, and one that is certainly perplexing. It has an interesting concept but what

Reisenbichler has chosen to do with it gives it a new approach and certainly one that is never quite what you would expect.

A longer version of this review was published on my blog <https://lostinagoodbk.wordpress.com/2...>

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### **sue says**

This was a really strange tale.

At the beginning it all started quite dramatic with Shelley going into labour and her husband fighting for his in hospital after a near fatal accident. He actually 'died' for a full Eight Minutes [hence the title]

Shelley gives birth to a little boy named Toby.

From there on we see how Shelley's life was quite 'normal' to all intense and purposes until that fatal day her husband stopped breathing for those Eight Minutes.

He has changed!

Did something happen in those Eight Minutes that changed him from the husband she knew?

Her marriage is now being split asunder, not only that, Toby is growing and as he's getting older he gets an Imaginary friend, or at least, that' is what it seems on the surface.

Life has got very odd.

Without giving too much away, it was a good read, it kept me entertained, however, because its near to paranormal, supernatural, things that go bump in the night kinda things, for me, it was creepy. I don't like things appertaining to supernatural its gives me the eebie geebies :O

All in all though, for those readers that do like this kind of thing, its a GREAT read so hence the 3.5 stars

**I would like to say thank you to Lake Union Publishing via Net Galley for allowing me to read and review my copy**

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### **Katie says**

**No wonder it was free**

Who would pay for such crap? Received as the Samsung book of the month, and was very disappointed.

Weak, predictable story that pulled every punch. Full of cliches and offensive stereotypes. Poorly edited, lazy character development. Waste of time. Not even worth reviewing in full sentences.

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### **Lekeisha The Booknerd says**

This book has given me a migraine!!! I kind of figured it out but I'm still freaked about it. Still, I great read if you like reading about spirits/ souls.

\*Full Review To Come\*

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